Promotion of tourism in India

†2461. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has provided some incentives to the tourists of certain countries with a view to promote tourism in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of such countries in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) No specific incentives have been provided to the tourists of any country. However, the facility of long-term multiple entry tourist visas of five year duration has been introduced for the nationals of 18 countries. The names of these countries are, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Belgium, Finland, Spain, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Argentina, Brazil, Chili, Mexico and Vietnam. This long-term visa would carry stay stipulation of 90 days on each visit.

Earn-while-you-learn scheme in tourism sector

2462. MS. MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Centre has launched "earn-while-you-learn scheme" in tourism sector, to encourage students to take up part-time jobs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the students would be imparted the requisite training for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The scheme titled "Earn while you learn" is a short term training program of 21 days to encourage youth to work as student volunteers in tourism industry.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The training covers the heritage of India, an over view of Tourism Travel and Hospitality Industry besides Managerial and Behavioral skills.

Foreign tourists visiting India

2463. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:
SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has been promoting tourism and the number of foreign tourists have increased over four million during the previous year, compared to 2.2 million five years ago;

(b) if so, whether the foreign exchange earned last year was to the tune of $5.5 billion compared to $3 billion in 2002;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the steps Government is considering to take to increase the infrastructure facilities for tourists;

(d) whether any concrete plan of action has been prepared by the Ministry to develop the tourism in India; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The Government has been taking various measures to promote tourism with a view to increase the flow of foreign tourists to India. The number of foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) in India has increased from 2.38 million in 2002 to about 5 million in 2007.

(b) The foreign exchange earnings (FEE) from tourism in India have increased from US$ 3.10 billion in 2002 to an estimated US$11.62 billion in 2007.

(c) to (e) Development and promotion of tourism is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/UT Administrations. However, the Ministry of Tourism extends financial assistance to them for tourism infrastructure projects which are identified in consultation and interaction with them. To facilitate development of tourism in a systematic and wholistic manner, the Ministry of Tourism had commissioned 20-Year Perspective Plans for States/ Union Territories at the beginning of the 10th Five Year Plan. These perspective plans, which give action plans for tourism development in the short term and long term, were sent to the State/UT Governments to guide them in initiating action for development and promotion of tourism.

Fall in visiting tourists

2464. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tourists visiting our country has been decreasing for the last 3 years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that during the year 2007 there was only five million tourists arrival as against the 10.3 million tourists who visited Singapore during that period; and

(d) if so, what is Government's reaction in regard thereto and remedial steps Government proposes to take to attract tourists from foreign countries?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The foreign tourist arrivals in India have increased in last 3 years as may be seen from the figures below:—

Year	Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India (in million)
2005	3.92
2006	4.45
2007*	5.00

*Provisional